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UNCLAS VANCOUVER 001614

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: CSI VANCOUVER: RUNNING SMOOTHLY WITH CANADA'S FULL SUPPORT

1. (U) The Port of Vancouver was one of the US Department of Homeland Security's original Container Security Initiative ports in 2002. US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officials explained that out of 10,000 or so shipments that come into the port per month, only about 2 to 3 percent are stopped for additional security checks by CSI and Canadian officials. The system is working smoothly with Canada's full cooperation. Interestingly, most of the shipments coming to Vancouver's ports are from Asian ports where other CSI operations already exist. Therefore, these US bound shipments have already been checked at their origin and are essentially being checked twice by US Customs and Border officials. CBP officials in Vancouver do not view this as duplicative, but rather, they see it as a valuable tool that keeps the supply chain to US destinations more secure in an international shipping environment mired in high volume and complex bureaucracy.

2. (U) CSI is established at 40 ports worldwide and its original intent was to intercept potential weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from entering the US from foreign origins. So far, no known WMD have been detected through CSI but CBP officials believe that CSI is a deterrent for these weapons. Additionally, CBP has successfully interdicted IPR violators, chemical precursors, drugs, and illegal cigarettes from Vancouver's ports.

3. (U) There are only two CBP officials managing CSI from Vancouver, both on long term TDY status. They told us that they check containers based mostly on anomalies found in Bills of Lading or erroneous manifests received from freight forwarders. The paperwork for containers is complicated. For example, one Bill of Lading could have 15 containers attached to it, whereas sometimes one container could have several Bills of Lading associated with it. Therefore, working closely with CBP counterparts at other CSI ports as well as with Canadian officials becomes paramount for determining anomalies. If they determine that a container warrants further inspection, they can decide to x-ray it or to "strip" the container entirely. CSI shares a warehouse facility in Burnaby (a suburb of Vancouver) with Canadian officials for these purposes. When US bound containers are shipped to Vancouver, they either: 1) remain on board and are moved to the US by ship, or 2) are loaded onto trucks or trains for US destinations.

4. (U) Other useful security and time-saving tools available to US officials are the "24 hour rule" which requires that manifests arrive 24 hours before the containers, allowing inspection officials to review the content and amount beforehand and then match that information with the size and number of containers that follow 24 hours later. CTPAT is a program where freight forwarding companies can apply to become "trusted travelers" similar to how NEXUS Land or Air work.

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